

# JOHN HOWARD LAWSON: CHILDHOOD

By Le Roy ROBINSON

Most historians of 20th century American drama\* discuss John Howard Lawson's experimental dramas of the 1920s\*\* or his social protest dramas of the 1930s\*\*\*--the twenty-year period which literary historian Robert E. Spiller calls the high point in the history of American drama. Some literary historians consider Lawson's work at moderate length. None has given it a full treatment. There is hardly any discussion of his writings before 1923, the year of his first Broadway production. There is no biography of Lawson and he has not published his autobiography.\*\*\*\* This report, then, is the first on his early life.\*\*\*\*\* The report is factual, but it suggests, implicitly and explicitly, possible relationships between Lawson's childhood writings and some of his later more substantial ones.\*\*\*\*\*

\*E. g., Moses *The American Dramatist* 1925; Flexner *American Playwrights* 1938; Mantle *Contemporary American Playwrights* 1938; Block *The Changing World in Plays and Theatre* 1939; Gagey *Revolution in American Drama* 1947; Sievers *Freud on Broadway* 1955; Krutch *The American Drama Since 1918* 1957; Broussard *American Drama* 1962; Himelstein *Drama Was A Weapon* 1963; Rabkin *Drama and Commitment* 1964; Williams *Stage Left* 1972; Goldstein *The Political Stage* 1974.

\*\*Roger Bloomer 1923; *Processional* 1925; *Nirvana* 1926; *Loud Speaker* 1927; *The International* 1928.

\*\*\**Success Story* 1932; *The Pure in Heart* 1934; *Gentlewoman* 1934; *Marching Song* 1937.

\*\*\*\*When John Howard Lawson died in August 1977 he was working on his autobiography, "A Calendar of Commitment," but he did not finish it. His daughter Susan Amanda Lawson is now editing it for publication.

\*\*\*\*\*This report is a revised version of pages 105 through 112, "John Howard Lawson: The Early Years I" *Keiei to keizai*, Vol. 57-1. No. 146. July 1977. pp. 105-124. This revision includes material not used earlier and other material from Lawson's "A Calendar of Commitment," parts of which Susan Amanda Lawson has kindly permitted me to read.

\*\*\*\*\*All unpublished writings by John Howard Lawson referred to herein (except "A Calendar of Commitment") were, when I read them, in the personal files of John Howard Lawson, who permitted me to read them. All letters referred to herein are, unless otherwise noted, letters to me.

John Howard Lawson, named by his mother after the famous 18th century prison reformer John Howard, was born in New York City on September 25, 1894.<sup>1</sup> Soon after his birth the Lawson family, then living in a rather new brownstone house on West 94th Street, moved to New Rochelle on Long Island.

John Howard Lawson's mother, Belle Hart Lawson, the daughter of a well-to-do New York Jewish family, loved art and literature, and she was interested in child education (she had studied Pestalozzi and Froebel) and child welfare.<sup>2</sup> At one time she had a kindergarten in her home for her two older children, Wendell Holmes Lawson (b. 1887) and Adelaide Jaffery Lawson (b. 1889) named after Belle Hart Lawson's closest friend, with whom she studied social problems. (Belle Hart Lawson was concerned about crime and the slums and in the late 1880s was active in the struggle for women's rights.) Both of these children at one time attended the New York School of the Society for Ethical Culture, a non-denominational, non-ritualistic, eclectic religious organization whose Sunday morning services, which John Howard Lawson may have sometimes attended as a young boy, included an address, not a sermon, preceded by a musical performance.<sup>3</sup>

After a long illness in bed (she had cancer of the breast), almost from the time of John Howard Lawson's birth, Belle Hart Lawson died in New Rochelle during the Christmas season of one year at the turn of the century, when Lawson was about six years old. When he was about 74, Lawson wrote in "A Calendar of Commitment": "The recognition that my mother was dying is still vivid in my consciousness. I crept around the house, forbidden to make any noises, introduced for a few minutes each day to the shadowy room where my mother lay in quiet agony." Those few minutes were the "high point" of the six-year-old boy's day: "I took a flower into the sick room. My mother smiled and kissed me and I wanted the moment of tenderness to last forever." The time permitted Lawson for these visits grew shorter and shorter: "Then finally the door was closed against me. My father took my hand and tried to explain but I could not understand."

John Howard Lawson's father, Simeon Levy Lawson, born in Springfield, Massachusetts, in the early 1850s of Polish immigrant parents<sup>4</sup> (they went to the United States in the 1840s to escape anti-Semitic Pogroms in Poland), was Reuters News Agency's General Manager in the United States and Canada from 1892 to 1920, when he retired. He legally changed his surname from Levy to Lawson in

the late 1860s because of anti-Semitism in the United States. He signed his name S. L. Lawson or S. Levy Lawson. About this "naive compromise"<sup>5</sup> which led the Lawsons to a "series of stratagems" to hide their "Jewish identity," John Howard Lawson writes in "A Calendar of Commitment":

When I was a child, I plagued him with questions about his first name. The sound of the three words Simeon Levy Lawson enchanted me and I would write/them/in large block letters. I could not understand why this disturbed him.<sup>6</sup>

In "A Calendar of Commitment" John Howard Lawson says his father's main purpose in changing his name was to permit his children to have all the advantages of the American Dream as exemplified in upper class Anglo-Saxon culture and education:

He felt that culture was the key to a good life, the moral basis for happiness and accomplishment, and he associated culture with the American values. He dreamed of our being civic leaders, philosophers, artists.

Simeon Levy Lawson's career as a journalist may have begun with the Boston *Herald* in the 1870s.<sup>7</sup> He may also have worked for the New England Press Association editing news for transmission to Reuters. In 1880 he started the *Mexican Financier*, a bilingual business weekly issued in Mexico City, where he was a foreign correspondent for several American newspapers and for Reuters. In 1886 he sold the *Mexican Financier* for a sum that made him comparatively wealthy, and he and his wife, who was not well, moved, at her request and the suggestion of doctors, to New York. Simeon Levy Lawson often visited London on business and became well-acquainted with both Baron Herbert and Baron George de Reuter. He was one of the few Reuters officials who had somewhat intimate personal relations with founder Baron Julius Reuter, at whose London home he was always a welcome guest, and he frequently dined there with the members of the Reuter family.

Simeon Levy Lawson was apparently a seeker for more than news. After the death of his wife, whom he idealized and whom he believed he would meet again in a future life, he became interested in mysticism,<sup>8</sup> and he began to study the writings of Theosophists, Madame Blavatsky and Annie Besant, and went to Theosophical Society meetings. At one time Simeon Levy Lawson took his children to the Unitarian

When he was a young boy John Howard Lawson often read *The Theosophic Messenger*. He also read Besant's *The Ancient Wisdom* when he was quite young. In "The Evolution of Society" (which Lawson read as a teen-ager) Besant writes that Society is evolving toward "that Golden Age which poets have chanted, which dreamers have visioned, which martyrs have died for: toward that new Republic of Man, which exists now in our hope and our faith, and shall exist in reality on earth." In idea and in style this is quite in keeping with Lawson's thinking as late as *The International* (1928).

Church and at another time to the Church of Christ, Scientist. The Lawsons joined the First Church of Christ, Scientist (New York) at 96th Street and Central Park West, where for about four years in the first decade of the twentieth century John Howard Lawson regularly attended Sunday services, where he sang the songs in the *Christian Science Hymnal*,<sup>9</sup> and Sunday school, where he studied *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*, and Wednesday night testimonial meetings, where he listened to other church members testify to the efficacy of their faith. At home, under the guidance of his father, he studied *Science and Health*, which describes Christian Science as the "Science of Life," and *The Christian Science Journal*. When he was sick, he was treated, mentally, by church practitioners,<sup>10</sup> who emphasized the Christian Science concept of the Pure Will of God<sup>11</sup> as expressed by human beings.

Simeon Levy Lawson gave a lot of money to the church and served on some of its important administrative committees. He gave formal dinners for members of the church, and the Lawsons were formally entertained in return. But the upper class social status he sought for his family was elusive.

Simeon Levy Lawson died in the mid-1930s at the age of 84 or so. His daughter has remembered him as a "very sensitive" man, who, after his wife's death, "tried to be mother and father to his children." In "A Calendar of Commitment" Lawson refers to the aftermath of his mother's death:

The doom that lay upon us was not solely the loss of a beloved person. My father lost the design and purpose of his life. He was not yet 50 years old. He never remarried. As far as I can tell, he never looked at another woman.

Lawson describes his father as at that time a "frail, nervous man...abnormally sensitive," with a "fierce determination" to give his children what he thought their mother would have given them: "He wanted three things for us: a 'good'

upper class environment, a broad intellectual development, an American identity.” It was an “impossible” task, Lawson says, “especially for a man who was aloof, gentle, hypersensitive,” and he says all of the Lawsons were “scarred” by it.

Until his mother’s death, John Howard Lawson, who, his sister says, was “very shy as a child, but very outgoing,” attended the Children’s Playhouse, a private kindergarten in New Rochelle, founded by Simeon Levy Lawson and operated by Elizabeth Byrne Ferm and her husband, who were dedicated to the principle that children learn best through self-expression and imaginative play. In “A Calendar of Commitment” Lawson writes: “Mrs. Ferm...was a remarkable woman with ideas of education much ahead of her time. My parents supported her work and wanted me to be under her influence.”

In a book on education,<sup>12</sup> Mrs. Ferm writes about John Howard Lawson as a child:

He had an invalid mother and a highly nervous father and was in the general care of a governess. He had no street experience. Once a day he was taken to a park or a museum... He seemed quite self-centered and self-employed. One day I heard a loud noise. When I investigated I found John with a croquet ball which he banged from one end of the large room to the other. Every time it struck the baseboard it left a large dent... The boy’s fury indicated he was hammering away at all the things which had held him in his infancy and which now restricted him...

About this, Lawson says in “A Calendar of Commitment”: “The croquet ball did express a kind of protest,” and it also expressed some of his fury at his mother’s impending death.

After his mother’s death, John Howard Lawson and his sister Adelaide Jaffery Lawson boarded (he was the only male boarder) at the Halsted School, then a small private coeducational primary school, in Yonkers, New York. Their father and brother Wendell Holmes Lawson, who went to a public high school in Yonkers, lived in a nearby apartment.

At the Halsted School, whose motto was *Possunt quia, posse videntur*, They are able who think they are able,<sup>13</sup> John Howard Lawson was placed in the care of a teacher named Florence Young,\* whom he always remembered, with a “puzzled

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\*In a letter (June 13, 1978) Susan Brown Johannesen describes Florence Young as a “tall, thin woman, always with a lot of keys worn at her waist. She was a severe-looking woman, but really very pleasant.”

and deep emotion," as a "kind and beautiful" person, "divinely young," and whom he, as a boy, regarded as an "administering angel, sent to care for /him/ alone." Miss Young, a "prim spinster," in love with 19th century literature, taught the young boy to know the "shapes and magic of words," words often beyond his understanding, words "she taught me to feel." Lawson was not lonely at the Halsted School and made friends easily, but the "treasure" of his days there was the shelf of books he shared with Miss Young: *The Swiss Family Robinson*, *Alice in Wonderland* (which "troubled" him because he could not relate it to any real experience), *Treasure Island*, *Robinson Crusoe*, *Tales from Robin Hood*, *Ivanhoe* and other novels by Walter Scott whose romantic stories seemed to the young boy to have a "direct connection" with the world he lived in. Miss Young "never relaxed her modesty or risked any display of physical affection. Yet her love surrounded and sustained me."

John Howard Lawson was happy at the Halsted School, almost all of whose students at the time were children of wealthy families,\* where he and his sister were apparently the first Jewish children to be admitted,\*\* but his sister encountered some difficulties, being snubbed by her classmates. Simeon Levy Lawson reacted "in the only way that was open to him," Lawson writes in "A Calendar of Commitment."

He bought a carriage (a stupendous vehicle, a barouche or something of the kind), drawn by two horses with a coachman in light-brown livery with a cockade in his light brown hat. The fairy coach wrought its magic.

The Lawson children "were surrounded by a bevy of children" who admired the carriage, which after that arrived every afternoon, and children took turns riding in it. Adelaide Jaffery Lawson's difficulties began to diminish. Nevertheless, she was quite sensitive, and quite conscious of her special situation, and was not happy at Halsted.

At the Halsted School Lawson became "vaguely aware" that the world outside

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\*Lawson's best friend at Halsted was Eugene Clark, the son of the Treasurer of the Alexander Smith Carpet Company. "The Clarks were Episcopalians," says Susan B. Johannesen. "Their /large/ house /on North Broadway/ was for many years the Hudson River Country Club." \*\*"In those days," Susan B. Johannesen says, "there were very few jews /sic/ in town & the more educated ones were taken at their own worth."

was changing. For him, the recognition of change came in 1904, when he was about ten years old. "The New York Central tracks skirted the Hudson River at Yonkers," he writes in "A Calendar of Commitment," "and there were strict rules that we /Halsted pupils/ must never enter the dangerous area along them. But the publicity concerning the 20th Century Limited was too attractive to be ignored":

A group of boys went down the hill to a crossing to see the fastest train in the world pass by. As the train approached, the noise became frightening. The sheer bulk of it, as the headlight emerged from the twilight, seemed like some friendly monster. The lighted windows passed us, then the open observation car with four or five passengers...they waved and were almost immediately out of sight. The quiet of the autumn was restored. I was lost in my own special vision of the train and would often try to understand the poetry, the lost wonder of the great trains linking cities and states.

In "A Calendar of Commitment" Lawson sums up his experience in Yonkers:

I was too young to know, as my sister knew, that we had only the most tenuous connection with the social life of the town. My best friend was the son of the president of a huge factory. I occasionally went with him to his father's office or had dinner with his family. But these people were as remote from me as the passengers behind the windows of the Twentieth Century Limited...

"except that my sister and I were the transients, tolerated only because we were passing through."

John Howard Lawson ("Donum," later "Jack") and Adelaide Jaffery Lawson ("Ladle")<sup>14</sup> boarded at the Halsted School until he was about ten and she about 15 years old. The Lawson family then moved to New York City, living together at the Chatsworth Apartments, 344 W. 72nd Street at Riverside Drive, then one of the more elegant New York apartment houses.

For the ten year old boy the move from the suburbs to the city was a "shock."<sup>15</sup> New York traffic was becoming dangerous and in the autumn of 1905 while riding his bicycle he had an accident at 72nd Street and Broadway. He was pleased, however, that the Lawson's 11th floor, four-bedroom (one for a governess) apartment overlooked the freight yards of the New York Central Railroad, and he "never grew tired of watching the shifting patterns of the cars."<sup>16</sup>

Wendell Holmes Lawson, who had been unhappy in high school in Yonkers,

went to Berlin, Germany, to study music. He wanted to be a conductor. Simeon Levy Lawson placed him in a "carefully selected" Berlin *pension* and, in addition to his classes at the Conservatory of Music, arranged expensive private lessons for him with famous musicians. Adelaide Jaffery Lawson went to the Horace Mann School in New York where she finished high school, graduating on May 31, 1907.

John Howard Lawson went to the Cutler School, an expensive private "prep" school for boys on 50th Street near St. Patrick's Cathedral. There, where he was the only Jewish student,<sup>17</sup> besides preparing for college, he played hockey and basketball and football. "Dickens and football were equally important" to him. As he did all his life, he participated in public speaking activities: in a recitation contest on May 28, 1907 he won the Junior Class Second Prize for his recitation of the poem, "The Intrepid Bee."

He sometimes visited Florence Young at the Halsted School in Yonkers, and he often wrote to her as "Dear Missung":

October 12, 1905

Dear Missung,

Won't you please come down here to take dinner or supper? I am having a fine time at Cutler...I am getting to know a good many of the fellows and most of them are very nice...It is awfully funny having men teachers.

November 30, 1905

Dear Missung,

It is awfully cold here and my bicycle is busted...I am still reading *Nicholas Nicholby* /sic/ and am only a little over half-way through it...I am blotting a little because I am writing with a feather pen and I never wrote with one before.<sup>18</sup>

Simeon Levy Lawson tried to find a suitable replacement for Florence Young but could not, and a "succession of /governesses/ chosen for their cultural attainments came and went." John Howard Lawson and Adelaide Jaffery Lawson became more dependent on each other, and their lack of close friends troubled their father. Simeon Levy Lawson then "decided on an expensive solution" and sent his children on a grand tour of Europe.

The Lawson family was, as Adelaide Lawson Gaylor has written, "comfortably well off,"<sup>19</sup> and in the summers they usually took vacation trips to exclusive resort hotels on Long Island or in the White Mountains or the Adirondacks, exclu-



sive places where they were sometimes embarrassed: "A carriage would be called and the manager would courteously direct us to a hotel that catered to Jewish clientele." In the summer of 1906, when John Howard Lawson was not quite 12 years old (Lawson says in "A Calendar of Commitment" that he was a little young at the time to appreciate the advantages of foreign travel but he was enthusiastic about the prospect), he and Adelaide Lawson went to Europe for the summer, visiting relatives in London and then touring on the continent.

Simeon Levy Lawson joined his children in the planning of this trip, but he did not go with them. The Lawson children were accompanied by Mary Sicard Jenkins, the principal of the Halsted School. (John Howard Lawson "begged" his father to employ Florence Young as their chaperone, but Simeon Levy Lawson considered her too inexperienced.) Mary Sicard Jenkins has been described<sup>20</sup> as a "very educated and well-read and informed person...an Episcopalian.../who/ had very high standards of conduct and ethics." Simeon Levy Lawson considered her the person best able to introduce his children to the culture of Europe.

John Howard Lawson had been reading books "far beyond his years," his sister has written -- history, philosophy, religion, classical and modern drama -- and he had been trying his own hand at writing. (According to his sister, he had tried to write verse drama at the age of eight or nine.) In the summer of 1906 he kept a journal (unpublished) of "Places Visited in the Summer of 1906 While Traveling in Europe." This rather impersonal journal, kept regularly in England, France, Germany, Holland and Switzerland, is valuable as a sourcebook for influences on the 12-year-old would-be author making a first-hand discovery of the visible European high culture of the past: parks and gardens, colleges, libraries, museums, galleries, castles, palaces, churches, cathedrals, mausoleums.

May 25. Hyde Park. "I don't like it as well as Central Park." "We rode on the horses a lot today. They are fine."

May 26. Regent Street Crescent. "Quite funny, because the buildings are all the same."

May 27. "I like the Metropole much better than the Cecil, but I think I like the New York hotels better than either of them."<sup>21</sup>

May 30. Westminster Abbey. "Robert Browning, Milton, Dickens, Carlyle /sic/, and many others are buried there." (He noted with interest the many "old, tattered banners.")

May 30. Albert Memorial. He was impressed by statues of poets, musicians, artists, statesmen and warriors.

- June 2. National Gallery of Art. "I like the Dutch and Flemish rooms much the best."
- June 7. Carlyle's house.
- June 8. The Tate Gallery.
- June 9. Hampton Court Palace.

On June 11 he was impressed by a bronze statue, "Carrying Off the Sabine Women," and by a De Campo painting, "The Witches of Macbeth," which he found "very weird." On June 12 he liked another bronze statue, "Pluto Carrying Off Persephone." \*

On June 15 he went to the Tower of London. He noted the Lawsons' had a special pass and could go where the general public could not. He looked into Raleigh's cell, where, he noted, Raleigh during his confinement of 12 years wrote his *History*.

- June 16. Stratford-on-Avon. He sat in Shakespeare's chair.
- June 19. Kew Gardens. "The flowers and trees were wonderful."
- June 22. British Museum (second visit). "The things which interested me most were pieces of the original manuscripts of a Sapphic /sic/ Ode, Homer's *Iliad* and Homer's *Odyssey* /sic/ on brown stuff."

On June 28 in Delft, Holland, he saw a Gothic church that impressed him. On July 6 he visited the Royal Palace, Charlottenburgh, where he saw a marble statue, "The Angel of Death," and Frederick III's mausoleum: "It is a very weird /sic/ place because a blue light comes through the window."

On July 11 he went to the Dresden Gallery of Art. There he saw a Holbein Madonna, a Murillo Madonna, and a Raphael Madonna (Madonna di San Sisto), which he called Raphael's "finest work." On July 12 he saw Raphael's Madonna again: "I like it better every time I see it." On July 13 he saw Raphael's Madonna again: "I even think it is the finest picture I have ever seen."

In August, back in England, he visited Oxford University, noting particularly the English Gothic Style of All Soul's College and Brasenose College. In Liverpool he went to the Walker Art Gallery to see paintings by Rossetti and Burne-Jones: "I did not like them much, but I think I would when I got used to them. The color seemed rather staring /sic/ at first, but it was blended very well."

On shipboard, on the return to the United States:

- August 26. "Played most of the day." The sea was "rather ruff."
- August 28. "Still ruff."

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\*In *Servant-Master-Lover* (1916) a Tall Masked Man carries Cinders off. In *Processional* Dynamite Jim carries off Sadie Cohen.

August 29. "Ruffer."

August 30. "Writing in the morning. Played till four o'clock. Then chess and writing."

In "A Calendar of Commitment" Lawson says he and his sister returned to the United States from this trip to Europe with a "passion for culture that guided /their/ lives."

That this passion for culture was not a passing fancy is indicated by John Howard Lawson's "Theatre Book," an album or scrapbook (unpublished) which is a collection of programs of cultural events he attended (usually with his sister) in New York as an adolescent. These programs give a good impression of his interests from the time he was about 11 to the time he was about 14 years old. In "A Calendar of Commitment" Lawson says that at that age he "feasted" on cultural opportunities, adding that, by constant attendance at cultural events, he "compensated for everything else, whatever /he/ lacked in family warmth or social ties."

He attended lectures on art. Early in 1907 he went to six lectures on "Pathways to the Fields of Art" by Daniel A. Huebsch, Ph. D., and he was impressed by Huebsch's quotation from Ruskin on Art:

It is no handiwork for drawing room tables, no relief for the ennui of boudoirs; it must be understood and taken seriously or not at all. To advance it, men's lives must be given; and to receive it their hearts.

In a public lecture at the First Unitarian Church of Los Angeles, April 9, 1964, Lawson said that in his early teens he "haunted" art galleries. His "Theatre Book" bears him out.

In January 1907 he went to the Ehrich Galleries twice, once to a portrait show, e. g., "Lady" by Lotto, "Lord" by Raeburn, "General" by Rizi, and "Revolutionary John Milton" by Dobson, and once to a show of "18th Century French Art," e. g., "Girl with a Cat" by Greuze, "Marie Mancini" by Mignard, and "The Apotheosis of Music" by Van Loo.

In March 1907 he went to the Montross Gallery to see "Ten American Painters," among them Benson, Chase, Childe Hassam, Simmons, and J. Alden Weir.

In April 1907 he went to the Ehrich to see "Early American Art",--- Copley, C. W. Peale, R. Peale, Stuart, Jowett, and Trumbull. On the evening of April 17 he went to the Fifth Avenue Art Galleries to attend a sale of paintings from the collection of Edward Brandus.

In November 1907 he went to the Montross for a "Water Color and Pastel Show" by Childe

Hassam and John La Farge.

In January 1908 he saw water colors by F. Hopkinson Smith at the Noe Galleries, paintings by Jerome Myers at the Macbeth Gallery, and paintings by Willard L. Metcalf at the Montross, and portraits by A. Benziger at the Knoedler Gallery.

In February 1908 he went to the Montross to see paintings by Arthur Wesley Dow; to the Macbeth to see the work of painters "attacked by academicians for bad drawing," e. g., Davies ("spiritual"), Ernest Lawson ("light, fairy touch"), Shinn ("theatrical, flashy"), Glackens, Henri (with whom Adelaide Lawson later studied painting), Prendergast, Luks, and Sloan, whose "Sixth Avenue and Thirtieth Street" ("dark, peculiar") pictured the city in a way the 14-year old boy had never seen it; to the Montross again to see paintings by T. W. Dewing and D. W. Tryon; and the Durand-Ruel Galleries to see paintings by J. C. B. Corot: "most interesting, rare exhibit. a very dark sad note. very little life, but good technique/sic/. wonderful effects produced. imagination in some."

In March 1908 he went to the Knoedler to see paintings by Andre Brouillet ("ordinary methods") and water colors by Anthony Dyer; and to the Oehme Galleries to see paintings by Raphael Lewisohn: "Italian boy was the best, done in an almost classic style. Coloring good, but not brilliant as in most of the others, and more carefully done. Exactly opposite of Corot."

He was interested in not only the aesthetics of art but also the economics: On February 22, 1907 he attended an auction at the Waldorf-Astoria Grand Ballroom and kept a record of starting bids and final selling prices, e. g., the bidding for Gainsborough's "Portrait of the First Marquis of Lansdowne" started at \$2,500 and ended at \$5,000.

In "A Calendar of Commitment" Lawson says his taste in art was guided at the time by the people around him: "I imitated the slightly frozen reverence of listeners to music, the whispered wisdom of connoisseurs of painting." He says that actually the prices of paintings were his measure of aesthetic values. As he puts it in "A Calendar of Commitment" "...in buying culture from the bourgeoisie, you are likely to accept their standard of value."

As a young boy John Howard Lawson also often attended music events.

On the afternoon of February 18, 1906 he went to Carnegie Hall to hear the Boston Symphony Orchestra play Rimsky-Korsakoff's "Scheherezade." On the afternoon of December 29, 1906 he went to the Metropolitan Opera House for a performance of *Siegfried*. On December 31 he went to Wanamaker Auditorium for an organ-piano recital of the Pilgrim's

Chorus from *Tannhauser*.

On January 12, 1907 he attended a Metropolitan Opera House matinee performance of *Lohengrin*. In the early afternoon of February 28, 1907 he went to St. Paul's Chapel at Columbia University to hear an organ recital by Samuel A. Baldwin, who played Julius Reubke's sonata based on the 94th Psalm: "Lord, how long shall the wicked triumph?"<sup>23</sup>

On the night of April 1, 1907 he went to the Manhattan Opera House to hear Emma Calve sing *Carmen*. On November 9, 1907 he went to the Manhattan Opera House to hear Mme. Bressler-Gianoli sing *Carmen* too. On the night of December 13, 1907 he went to the Manhattan Opera House again to hear Mary Garden sing *Thais*,<sup>24</sup> and again on the afternoon of December 15 to hear Mary Garden sing in the first American performance of *Louise*, the story of a Parisian working girl,<sup>25</sup> with scenes in a dress factory, with the evocation of the sounds and sights of a city, all of which "shattered" his preconceptions concerning opera.

Theatre-going was also a normal part of John Howard Lawson's life as a teenager.<sup>26</sup>

Sometime in the theatrical season of 1905-1906 he saw Maude Adams in *Peter Pan* and noted: "Little Liza, supposed author, before curtain."<sup>27</sup> In March 1906, before his first trip to Europe, he saw Richard Mansfield in *King Richard III*. In October 1906 he saw in his first American appearance Henry Irving in *Markheim* and in *Charles the First* by W. G. Wills.<sup>28</sup> In November 1906 he saw Forbes-Robertson and Gertrude Elliott in Shaw's *Caesar and Cleopatra*, and Robert Mantell in *Hamlet* and *Julius Caesar*.

On January 19, 1907 he saw the Deutsches Theater's *Wilhelm Tell*, performed in German.

In February 1907 he saw E. H. Sothern and Julia Marlowe in Percy Mackaye's *Jeanne d'Arc*, and in *Twelfth Night*. In March 1907 he saw Richard Mansfield in *Twelfth Night*. In March 1907 he saw Richard Mansfield in *Peer Gynt*, whose program note is like a short description of Lawson's future experimental dramas:

This Phantasmagoria, or comedy of human life, embraces all the elements of the serious, the pathetic, the tragic, the grotesque, the real and the unreal, the actualities and the dreams, the facts and the consequences, the hopes and the disillusion, and the dread and the terror and the resurrection in love of the human soul.

Sometime in March 1907 Lawson saw the Ben Greet Players do *As You Like It*. On the afternoon of March 23 he saw Ermete Novelli in *The Merchant of Venice*, and on the evenings of March 25 and March 28 he saw Novelli in *Othello* and *Hamlet*, respectively, all performances in Italian.

On May 6, 1907 he saw George Bradhurst's *The Man of the Hour*.

In November 1907 he saw Augustus Thomas's *The Witching Hour*. He also saw James Mac Arthur's musical adaptation from John Bunyan, *The Christian Pilgrim*, whose theme is "All the powers of Hell/Cannot against a righteous man prevail."

Sometime in early 1908 he saw David Warfield in David Belasco's production of Charles Klein's *The Music Master*. On January 18, 1908 he saw the Deutsches Theater's *Gotz von Berlichingen*, in German. In February 1908 he saw Henry Ludlowe do scenes from *The Merchant of Venice and Richard III*.

In "A Calendar of Commitment" Lawson says of himself at this period of heavy theatre-going:

For me the heart of life was Shakespeare. Other cultural events were incidental and became relevant as aspects of the emotional universe that Shakespeare opened to me...I was not able to measure what Shakespeare meant to me or to admit how little I understood of the passions that moved his characters. Yet these passions enlarged and aroused my consciousness: I acquired a feeling for theatre, not as make-believe, but as ritual and wonder. I was immersed in the plays, lost in the rhetoric and pageantry, exhausted at the end of an emotional experience.

The actors in Shakespeare plays at the time over-acted because they thought the emotion in the dramas was excessive and outside ordinary experience, Lawson says.

It was this excess of feeling that appealed to me as a boy...It was more beautiful and intense than anything I had known...Shakespeare introduced me to people making enormous and often fatal moral decisions. They were larger than life. They had huge appetites and dreams. All that I grasped at the time was their gargantuan vitality and their fateful acceptance of responsibility for their actions.

Lawson says Shakespeare gave him something he needed -- "moral awareness was as necessary to me as breathing."

In his early teens John Howard Lawson was also interested in more popular culture.

On the afternoon of May 3, 1907 he went to the Columbia University Oval to see Cutler, his prep school, compete against Browning in track and field events: "Browning won everything." (Except the high jump.) Sometime in February or March 1908 he went to Madison Square Garden to attend an "Annual National Motor Boat and Sportsman's Show."\* On the afternoon of February 20, 1908 he saw "Drills and Exercises" by the Drum and Bugle Corps of the Kyle Institute of Flushing, Long Island; that evening he went to the Bath Beach

\*In 1930 Lawson bought a 40-foot cabin-cruiser, second-hand.

Swimming Club to watch water sports and swimming races.

An impression of John Howard Lawson's literary ventures as a boy of 13 or 14, when he decided to be a playwright, emerges from his hard-to-read left-handed scrawl in pencil on yellow foolscap in notebooks (unpublished) of that period. As subjects for dramatization he was interested in the great men and great ideas of history,<sup>29</sup> the Middle Ages.

There are undated notes for a play entitled "The Barbarian" or "Theodoric the Great": "Humor. Some think the world a comedy/A satire of 10,000 years,/And all that heroes lived and died for,/Is but a smeared ungainly laugh." He apparently was going to contradict this way of thinking.

There are undated notes for a play in 20 scenes entitled "Henry, the fourth" ("A Drama of the early struggles of church and state.") One note is:

"Oh, Lord, have mercy on the Emperor." (Kneeling, half rises as he says the "Emperor") half in sarcasm, half in glory, at having done his best, and being emperor, even though men fail to recognize him.

This note suggests Lawson's later tendency as a playwright toward showing contradictions and ironies in characterization.<sup>30</sup>

There is an unfinished verse drama, dated November 9, 1908, entitled "Charlemagne" or "Carolus Augustus." (Lawson had just read Thomas Hodgkin's *Charles, the Great* of 1903.) The notes for this drama, "Ideas in Carolus Augustus," indicate that each idea is to be represented in one scene of the 14 projected scenes:

1. The Nation as an individuality...
3. The State as representing freedom...
4. The Church as representing absolutism and the unknown...
6. The growth of the principle of imperialism represented in Charles...
11. Women and imperialism (socialism)...

The notes on the characters of "Charlemagne" provide for one character to represent "conventionalism" and for another to represent "socialistic individualism." These notes provide for Charlemagne to be wise without being brave and for another character to be brave without being wise; for one character to possess insight without devotion and for another to possess devotion without insight. This balance is rhetorical, but there is also some subtlety in the conception noted on another page related to "Charlemagne" that "Complexity is the law of life."<sup>31</sup>

The second part of one projected line in this unfinished drama suggests Lawson's later use of language. The First Saxon says of Charlemagne: "And so a nation is to a man subjected, and millions into one small gold ring are crowded."

There is also a short decorum-breaking dialogue between three unnamed but numbered characters that indicates that Lawson's conception of *Processional* had its inception early in his life:

1. The hours march like a grand army. Time is the general, the years are the captains.
2. Yes, they go single-file.
3. How do you know how they go?
2. Oh, I have a grandstand seat at the continuous parade.

In "A Calendar of Commitment" Lawson says he abandoned "Charlemagne": "I was out of my depth and I knew it."

Whatever I was seeking, — realism or passion or historic grandeur, — was so far beyond my reach that I became infuriated after writing a few pages. I tore the sheets from the notebook. Then, controlling my anger, I smoothed out the rumpled sheets, and put them in an envelope, as a memento of my defeat.

He learned from this defeat, however, and he began to study dramatic literature seriously.

Thus, another important early sourcebook is Lawson's "Dramatic Notes." These undated (unpublished) notebooks, filled with outlines and diagrams, are of about this same period, 1908-1909, when Lawson began to accumulate dramatic literature — Aeschylus, Sophocles, Euripides, Moliere, Racine, *et. al.* They contain sometimes perceptive comments on many Elizabethan and Restoration dramas, e. g., *Gorboduc*, *Volpone*, *Edward II*, *Venice Preserved*, *'Tis Pity She's a Whore*, and masques, e. g., *The Triumph of Peace*, *The Vision of the Twelve Goddesses*. In one of these notebooks, on French and Spanish dramas, Lawson says that in Shelley's "remarkable" translation of Calderon's *Magico Prodigioso* "Lucifer is a fine character."<sup>32</sup> These notebooks, as well as the earlier notebooks on painting, indicate that Lawson's tendency to theorize about drama manifested itself early in his life.

The only completed pre-college drama of John Howard Lawson's that I have read is an unpublished five-act verse drama, dated January 22, 1908-November 1, 1908, entitled "Savitri" ("A Mythical, Romantic Drama of Mythological India, Founded on Edwin Arnold's Poem of Savitri, one of his Indian Idylls.")<sup>33</sup>



Among the characters of "Savitri" are a king, lords, a prophet, a poet, Yama the High God of Death, and Savitri. The settings include a grand hall, which is a golden room with a gold throne: "The whole...seems to be pervaded with incense,"<sup>34</sup> and a forest.

Savitri is a beautiful princess who "inspires love":

And she should,  
For is she not the chosen  
Of the goddess who is Beauty,  
Of the great and high Savitri?  
She who pitieth the sorrowing  
And giveth water to the dying.<sup>35</sup>

Savitri has to find a worthy husband, a man with a "hand of iron/But a heart both soft and loving."<sup>36</sup> After a long search Savitri finds one man, a handsome prince, whom she can love. She learns from a prophet that it is the destiny of this prince to die within a year, but she defiantly rejects the attempt of her father, the king, to dissuade her from marrying the doomed prince. She says: "I do praise the love eternal." As the curtain falls on this scene, there is heard a trumpet call.<sup>37</sup>

Savitri eventually confronts the "intangible shadow" that is Yama the Destroyer, or Death. She pleads with Yama to free her husband, the prince, from a fate "decided millions of years" before or to permit her to die with him. She says: "I fear you not, oh Death." Yama, impressed by her goodness and purity,<sup>38</sup> lets Savitri's husband live. The last line of the drama is: "All that is good has triumphed." The main theme of the drama is: "One good soul can break all decrees."

After he began "Savitri" Lawson needed more information about ancient India and in May 1908 he bought *Hindu Literature*, a book with translations from the *Mahabharata*, the *Ramayana*, and *Sakoontala*, this literature exerting a strong influence on him for a long time afterward.<sup>39</sup>

Another sourcebook for John Howard Lawson's interests in his early teens is a second unpublished travel journal, "New York to San Francisco and Return. Sights on the Way." The entries in this journal date from June 21, 1909 to July 20, 1909, when he was not quite 15 years old. On this hurried trip, Lawson's "first experience with the length and breadth of my native land," the Lawson children were again accompanied by Mary Sicard Jenkins, then still principal of the Halsted School in Yonkers.

On June 21, 1909 on a train ascending the Alleghanies (Lawson was disappointed at traveling on the Pennsylvania and not on the 20th Century Limited), he writes: "The majestic, dark calm mountains were very beautiful against the soft glow of the twilight."

On June 23, just arrived in Chicago and before the Lawsons went to their hotel, he attended a lecture at the Fine Arts Building by R. G. Moulton, who discussed *Macbeth* in relation to Greek tragedy.<sup>40</sup> On June 24 he visited Hull House, and he went to the top of the Auditorium Building: "We also road /sic/ in the elevated over the stockyards, a very busy, very dirty sight."

On June 25 he wrote a descriptive passage about a sunset which indicates he was making an effort at style:

Against the clear, transparent blue of the sky, first flashing out in a golden fire, then, as the sun rested on the edge of the distant hills, growing into a deep red disk, then the whole sky flaming into scarlet which became gradually deadened into pink, then into a rosy grey, and at last into a cold beautiful twilight, which while it took the warmth out of the rolling landscape, still contrasted grandly with the dark brownish green shading of the hills, or the greyish yellow of the occasional wheat fields.<sup>41</sup>

"But this was not yet the end. The darkness of the night, with its infinite grandeur and soft unfathomed depth, crept on, adding to the scene a touch of wonder, mystery, sweetness and softness."

On June 28 he got a view of the prairie from Point Sublime: "The shifting moving lights and shades upon the planes added to the beauty." On the same day he visited the Abe Lincoln Mine in Cripple Creek.<sup>42</sup> On June 29 he took a "Cripple Creek Excursion": "We took a ride on burros, those grotesque animals, with the solemnly ludicrous, and expressively stupid faces, who trot along at such a lazy rate, with their idiotic gate /sic/."

On June 30 he described the Royal Gorge as "dark, deep, tremendous, solemn, mysterious defiles."

An undated entry, apparently made June 30 or July 1, describes Salt Lake City as "not an attractive city." "The streets in general have a very lower middle-class air, abounding with cheap stores of the three and nine cent type and with dime theaters."<sup>43</sup> The young diarist modestly adds: "This is merely a first impression."

On July 2, the 12th day of his first trip to the American Far West, he went to the Mormon Tabernacle to hear an Organ Recital by Tracy Y. Cannon:

The program was not of the showy kind. It was not composed of trick pieces. As to the beauty of the organ: it had two advantages, the greatest being the ability to bring out every shade of tone and accentuate it so as to bring out the full and often complex meaning of the composer.

He says Cannon's volume lacked "sweetness of tone, that quality of harmonious tenderness, which is so hard to attain."

On July 2 he also went to Salt Lake City's City Hall to see the formal garden.

I approve of formal gardening, in general, for I think it gives a humanly designed feeling to the decoration. But to give this feeling, all stiffness must be avoided, while wilderness must not be counterfeited, a thing which is easier said than done.

On July 12 he noted the Mormon Temple "fails altogether to hold the eye." As for the Mormon religion, "First making the stipulation that I know nothing whatever about it, two things strike me in regard to the Mormon religion":

First, it is an attempt to materialize things, to bring symbols down to facts, and apply dreams to realities. More than any other religion it takes the bible /sic/ absolutely literally. This is its most prominent characteristic. Allied to this, and pursuing /proceeding?/ from it, is the recurrence /sic/ to ancient customs, forms, and ceremonies, gathered both from the Old and New Testaments. It might be termed a return to primitive conditions with all modern advantages, for the Mormons accept all the conveniences of civilization, and are proud of the modernity of their buildings, and the model equipment of their organizations.

On July 14, the 24th day of this trip, he noted that the trolley system of Los Angeles was "better than most" and that the Pacific Electric Company "monopolizes" almost all the suburban transportation system. On the same day, in Bimini Hot Springs, he enjoyed lemonade "free of charge." And on the same day he twice described the atmosphere of the City of Los Angeles: "Homes harmonized with one another, as if they were built for a common aim." Los Angeles "looks as if a lot squares (representing square blocks) had been juggled about, and then thrown out, like dice, so that an irregular system of streets was formed between them."

On July 15 at Avalon, Santa Catalina Island, he had the "best bath I have ever had, in the clearest, finest water I have ever seen," and in a glass-bottom boat he looked beneath the surface of the clear water into a "luxurious, tangled wilderness."

On July 20 he visited San Francisco, where he died in the autumn of 1977, and he noted that San Francisco was "not worth staying in a great while."

The most significant event of this 1909 trip to the West, Lawson says in "A Calendar of Commitment", was his meeting on the train between San Francisco and Portland with a young professor of literature who was "astonished" at the literary knowledge of the not quite 15-year-old boy with whom he talked as an equal. Lawson was able to respond to this young professor in a way which had not been possible for him with anyone else. For the first time, "I talked about

writing as if I were a writer." Lawson felt the young professor was a friend, and he "had never had a friend in this mature sense."

The professor advised Lawson not to attend Columbia University, where Simeon Levy Lawson was planning to send him, but to a smaller college away from home, where it would be easier for Lawson to make friends. This advice was partially responsible for Simeon Levy Lawson's decision to send John Howard Lawson to Williams College, which he considered more upper class and more aristocratic than other liberal arts colleges of the same kind.

#### NOTES

1. Stanley J. Kunitz reports Lawson's year of birth as 1895 in *Twentieth Century Authors* 1955, p. 561. This error, repeated elsewhere, e. g., *Meyers Neues Lexikon* 1963, is attributable to Lawson. Until sometime in the early 1960s, when he needed a copy of his birth certificate for insurance purposes, Lawson often mistakenly gave the incorrect date. (Conversation with John Howard Lawson, January 1964.) Lawson is not responsible for Tito Ranieri's report that Lawson was born in 1886 in *Film-lexicon Degli Autori E Delle Opere* 1959.
2. Information about Belle Hart Lawson derives from Adelaide Lawson Gaylor's letter, December 17, 1963, and from "A Calendar of Commitment."
3. The Society for Ethical Culture was founded in New York in May 1876 by Dr. Felix Adler, Professor of Hebrew and Oriental Literature, Cornell University. Adler appealed to his followers to "unfurl a new flag of peace and reconciliation over the bloody backgrounds where religions had fought in the past; he laid stress upon the urgent need of a higher and sterner morality to cope with the moral perils of the hour, especially...the growing laxity that accompanied the decline of discredited forms of religious belief..." Adler, a middle-class social reformer, tried to substitute for the ideal of personal profit and power the ideal of service, appealing for "greater justice and humanity between labor and capital, employer and employed." He advocated a "Union for the Higher Life" based on purity in sex, intellectual development, and service to the poor. The New York Society established a free kindergarten for poor people which developed into a workingman's school based upon Froebelian pedagogy. See Percival Chubb, "Ethical Movement and Ethical Societies in America and Abroad," *The Encyclopedia Americana* 1929. Vol. 10, pp. 537-540, and A. E. Haydon, "The Ethical Movement," *Encyclopedia Britannica* 1960. Vol. 8, pp. 756-757.
4. According to "A Calendar of Commitment," Simeon Levy Lawson's father made a lot of money during the Civil War and "installed" his family, including several children, in a mansion on New York's West Side in the vicinity of Chambers Street, then a fashionable neighborhood; but he lost all of his money, possibly because of personal failings.
5. He changed his name, but Simeon Levy Lawson had Jewish friends, he kept close contacts with his brothers and sisters, and he followed Jewish dietary laws.
6. Simeon Levy Lawson's avoidance of the name Levy impressed John Howard Lawson so

much that in college and for some time afterwards he wrote "Simeon L. Lawson" on documents requiring his father's name.

7. Simeon Levy Lawson's career as a journalist is described by B. W. Stockwell, then Personnel Director, Reuters Ltd, London, in a letter dated January 29, 1964. In "A Calendar of Commitment" Lawson says his father ran away from home when he was about 15 years old and learned journalism by doing odd jobs as a printer, copyreader and reporter in the American Far West.

8. As was John Howard Lawson until the 1930s, when he explicitly rejected mysticism.

9. E. g., Hymn 121: "How blest are they whose hearts are pure..." or Hymn 205: "O for a faith that will not shrink/Though pressed by every foe/That will not tremble on the brink/Of any earthly woe."

10. In *Nirvana* Lawson develops a Christian Science theme: the power of mind over matter; but in the same play a Christian Scientist is depicted negatively as a puritan. Images of Christ appear in several of Lawson's plays, e. g., *Nirvana*, *Success Story*, but in a childhood notebook, "Miscellaneous III," written when Lawson was about 12 or 13, he writes: "A philosopher is a man whose business it is to find out about God, and having discovered there is no God, he loses his job."

11. "To have no will of one's own, and yet not to understand the Will of God, leaves one helpless, without direction or security. There is nothing so conducive to energy, enterprise and progress as a pure will." Prime values for Christian Scientists are: Volition, resolve, purpose, direction, effort. See Kate Swope, "The Pure Will," *The Christian Science Journal*. Vol. 21. 1903-1904. pp. 595-598.

12. In "A Calendar of Commitment" Lawson quotes the passage about him in Elizabeth Byrne Ferm's *Freedom in Education* 1949, pp. 115-116. Mrs. Ferm, who died in 1944, was active in support of Henry George and in the woman suffrage movement. She had been head of the Brooklyn Guild Kindergarten, but she resigned because of objections to her insistence that children be free to develop their own abilities without adult control. Simeon Levy Lawson met her though Belle Hart Lawson's sister, Mrs. S. Stanwood Menken, who was also interested in the educational ideas of Pestalozzi and Froebel.

13. Susan Brown Johannesen, "Halsted School Marks Centennial," *Yonkers Historical Bulletin*, Vol. XXI. No. 2. Summer 1974. p. 4.

14. Wendell Holmes Lawson, "dignified and withdrawn," did not have a nickname. When they were young the Lawson children called their father "Pipi."

15. In *Roger Bloomer* this shock is perhaps expressed in Roger's fierce railing against New York.

16. All his life Lawson referred to the "mythic significance" of trains, a significance, he feared, all contact with which has been lost in the later years of the 20th century.

17. In "A Calendar of Commitment" Lawson says he was not very conscious of this fact at Cutler: "Once, when I was invited to spend a weekend at a schoolmate's house in Scarsdale -- a castle with acres of ground -- the conversation at dinner turned to names, and I announced proudly that my father's full name was Simeon Levy Lawson. There was a silence, and then the hostess started talking of other matters. I was not invited again, but there was no change in the relaxed atmosphere of the school. I cannot have ignored this

incident, because the impression is still vivid, yet I did not allow myself to draw any lesson from it."

18. Lawson continued to write to Florence Young for many years. In 1935, when she was very old, she sent him a packet of the letters he had written her through the years.

19. Simeon Levy Lawson is described as an "enormously successful self-made man" by Gary Carr, "John Howard Lawson: Hollywood Craftsmanship and Censorship in the 1930s," *ICarbS*, Vol. III, No. 1 (Summer-Fall 1976), p. 40.

20. By Susan Brown Johannesen, a former "Halsted Girl," who knew Mary Sicard Jenkins for many years, but "never knew of her connection with the Lawsons." Letter, July 7, 1977. Mary Sicard Jenkins resigned her principalship of the Halsted School in 1924. In retirement she was a member of Halsted's Board of Trustees until 1936, when she moved to Maryland, where she died in February 1946. See Susan Brown Johannesen, "Halsted School Marks Centennial," *Yonkers Historical Bulletin*, Vol. XXI, No. 2 (Summer 1974), pp. 5-6.

21. In an "Index to Places to stay at," he rates Morley's Hotel, London, "+"; Hotel Amstel, Amsterdam, "++"; and Goldener Adler Hotel, Nuremberg, "+++". His system of rating: "nothing - stayed here but did not like it"; +- stayed here and liked it; ++- did not stay here but it is nice; + +- special."

22. Adelaide Lawson had her first solo exhibition at the Whitney Gallery, March 17 to March 31, 1925. In "A Calendar of Commitment" John Howard Lawson says that Adelaide Lawson painted people in their daily activities -- at country fairs, in Harlem, at a Chinese theater --- and that her figures were "massive and grotesque, yet touchingly human, 'primitive' and wholly contemporary." In the announcement of her show at the Whitney in 1925, Frederick James Gregg, an art critic of the 1920s, considers Adelaide Lawson, Marie Laurencin in France and Gwen John in England as the "three most interesting women painters of the time."

23. In *Thunder Morning* (1953 unpublished) a black man cries out: "How long. Oh Lord, how long?"

24. Thais says that nothing is real but love, a major theme of Lawson's from childhood times.

25. In *Roger Bloomer* the working class heroine is named Louise. In *Louise* most of the characters are unnamed, e. g., a young ragpicker, a vendor, a policeman; similarly, many characters in *Roger Bloomer*, e. g., A Ragged Man, A Street Walker, A Drug Clerk, A Policeman. *Louise's* chorus of sewing girls may be a source for Lawson's chorus of stenographers in *The International*.

26. "Theatre-going had been a normal part of his life." Jay Williams, *Stage Left* 1974, p. 14.

27. In the 1920s Lawson advocated the elimination of the "fourth wall" convention of drama and the extension of playing space into the audience.

28. In the fall of 1908 Lawson began but did not finish a verse drama entitled "Charlemagne" or "Carolus Augustus."

29. In *Theory and Technique of Screenwriting* (1949, p. 438) Lawson says: "History offers rich opportunities for the 'individualization' of past events, showing the interplay of human wills shaping the course of nations, showing men and women mastering their fate."

30. The settings of this play include a palace, a castle, the Papal palace in Rome, and a

vault in a castle. One note suggests using a picture in Robinson's *History of Western Europe* for "landscape." Lawson was also reading Henderson's *Short History of Germany*.

31. In *A Hindoo Love Drama* (1914, unpublished) one character says: "What a tangled web/Life is: A thing of clamorous confusion."

32. In *Servant-Master-Lover* a novelist writes a novel entitled *The Prince of Darkness*. In *Nirvana* novelist Bill Weed says: "It's the Devil's time." (In the Broadway production of *Nirvana* this line was changed to: "Up with the Devil!") In *Success Story* advertising writer Sol Ginsburg early feels himself "sold to the devil" and later says he chooses to go to the devil.

33. In 1964 Lawson told me he had been inspired at the time he was 13 or 14 by Arnold's poem. But, as he told Jay Williams (*Stage Left*, 1974), he had trouble writing this verse drama into which he "poured his strength."

34. In "A Calendar of Commitment" Lawson says: "The golden room pervaded with incense was more real to me than the city in which I lived."

35. In "A Calendar of Commitment" Lawson refers to the poetry of "Savitri" as "ersatz Elizabethan."

36. In *Science and Health* Mary Baker Eddy says: "Both sexes should be loving, pure, tender, and strong."

37. Later in his professional career Lawson often used trumpets at the fall of the curtain. In "Savitri" other theatrical effects include: dancing girls (used again in *The International*), music continuing after the end of a scene (used again in *The Pure in Heart*), flames leaping up as the curtain descends (used again in *A Hindoo Love Drama*), dark red robes worn by priests carrying torches (used again in *A Hindoo Love Drama*), and a setting, in Act IV, of "slopes and slantings" (perhaps a foreshadowing of the slopes and slantings in *Loud Speaker* and *The International*.)

38. In "Savitri" Lawson deals apparently for the first time with the theme of the eternal feminine, which he used again in several plays.

39. In "A Calendar of Commitment" Lawson says that the "intellectual mysticism" of *Nirvana* derives in part from these sources.

40. In April 1909 Lawson had bought Moulton's *Ancient Classic Drama* as a guide to Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripedes whose then "unintelligible" plays he had begun to read in 1908.

41. In "A Calendar of Commitment" Lawson says he remembered these fields of wheat as he began to write *Roger Bloomer* in France in 1917.

42. *Processional* is set at a West Virginia coal mine. One important scene, a rape scene, takes place offstage in the pit of a mine.

43. The setting of *Processional* is very similar to this one.

(昭和53年 9月28日受理)